

## MEDIA CONTACT

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## RURAL COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

# Helping Oyster Growers Control Burrowing Shrimp



### HILARY S. FRANZ,

is Washington's fourteenth Commissioner of Public Lands since statehood in 1889.

Collaborative research to stem the expanding burrowing shrimp populations that kill growing oysters.

// **THERE'S NO SILVER BULLET HERE. IT'S A MUCKY SITUATION BUT WE'RE WADING IN. WE'VE GOT TO EXPLORE ALL OPTIONS AND FIND A SOLUTION—THERE ARE TOO MANY LIVELIHOODS AT RISK AND COMMUNITIES ON THE BRINK."**

**HILARY S. FRANZ**  
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS



WILLAPA BAY & GRAYS HARBOR, WA

### INVESTMENT

**\$1,065,000**

### PARTNERS

- Willapa Bay-Grays Harbor Oyster Growers Association
- Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Pacific County Economic Development Council
- Washington State University
- Washington Sea Grant

**1,840\*** jobs at risk statewide



**RESEARCH TO CONTROL BURROWING SHRIMP**



**25%**

**OF ALL UNITED STATES OYSTERS ARE PRODUCED IN THIS REGION**

**BEGINNING**  
**2018**

\* ESTIMATED BY NORTHERN ECONOMICS IN 2010



**HILARY S. FRANZ**  
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS



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## Partnering with communities for sustainable development opportunities.

### ABOUT DNR

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is present in every county in Washington state. From the shellfish beds of the Pacific coast to the eastern wheat fields of our state, DNR oversees a profound amount of resources and expertise. Three essential components of the agency's mission include the stewardship of state lands, meeting our trust beneficiary obligations and improving the quality of life for our residents to the maximum extent possible.

Willapa Bay produces 25 percent of our country's oysters, but the future of some family-owned oyster farms is uncertain due to expanding burrowing shrimp populations.

An investment of \$1 million will fund research to pilot new shrimp control techniques.

This funding will also help DNR identify unused tidelands that could be made available to impacted oyster farmers. The goal is to enable business operations to continue while solutions are explored.

Funding comes from DNR (\$65,000), the state legislature (\$950,000), and the Department of Agriculture (\$50,000).

DNR Aquatics staff, Department of Agriculture, the University of Washington's Sea Grant research program and local oyster growers will share facilitation responsibilities.

Pacific County has the third highest unemployment rate in the state of Washington.

**// UNTIL NOW, STATE LEADERS HAVE UNDERESTIMATED THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THIS PROBLEM. NOW, WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD AND MOVING QUICKLY. THIS COLLABORATIVE APPROACH IS A GOOD START, AND I COMMEND COMMISSIONER FRANZ AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITY TO FIND A SOLUTION."**

**BRIAN BLAKE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**// THE INCREASES IN BURROWING SHRIMP POPULATIONS CONTINUE TO THREATEN THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIES IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON AS THE SHELLFISH INDUSTRY IS THE LARGEST PRIVATE EMPLOYER IN PACIFIC COUNTY. THIS NEW PARTNERSHIP HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT THE MANY RESIDENTS WHOSE LIVELIHOODS DEPEND ON THESE JOBS."**

**KEN WIEGARDT**  
WGHOGA PRESIDENT

## About the Rural Communities Partnership Initiative

- Partnerships can be initiated and facilitated by a city council, chamber of commerce, DNR employees, county leadership, tribal governments, local organizations and businesses.
- There is no minimum requirement for a person or group to invite DNR to discuss potential collaboration or development and investment opportunities in a community, however we encourage interested parties to consider the whole community ecosystem when assembling proposals.
- Projects should intersect with DNR's lands and people and be geared toward creating hard economic value in local communities.
- These sustainable projects should offer long-term solutions that make use of renewable natural resources, maintain biodiversity, support ecological systems and can provide communities with multi-generational economic opportunities.

### INITIATIVE CONTACT

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